

CITY OF VANCOUVER

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

April 6, 1976

A Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Tuesday, April 6, 1976, at approximately 7:40 p.m. in the Auditorium, Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, 7055 Heather Street, Vancouver, to hear delegations on the proposed expansion of Vancouver International Airport.

PRESENT:

Mayor Phillips
Aldermen Bird, Boyce, Bowers,
Cowie, Harcourt, Kennedy,
Marzari, Sweeney and
Volrich

ABSENT:

Alderman Rankin

CLERK TO THE
COUNCIL:

R. Henry

On March 31, 1973, an Airport Planning Committee with federal, provincial, regional, municipal, and community representation was established to review the proposed expansion of Vancouver International Airport with the following terms of reference:

- To advise on studies needed to ensure that the proposed development is compatible with the planning of the various levels of government and the concerns of the public in the communities involved.
- To consider and make recommendations on the studies undertaken.

City Council at its meeting on December 9, 1975, resolved to hear delegations at a Public Meeting to be held following receipt of the final report of the Airport Planning Committee.

The Report was released in March 1976. Based on the Airport Planning Committee's consideration of ten study area reports and information on areas of agreement and issues derived from working papers and workshop sessions, the Report submitted three decision options indicating differing views on the future development of Vancouver International Airport, as follows:

1. to build a parallel runway at Vancouver International Airport
2. to postpone a decision on expansion unless and until certain vital conditions are met
3. not to proceed with the third runway now

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Vancouver International
Airport Expansion Proposal (cont'd)

Option #1 is generally supported by the following Airport Planning Committee member agencies: Air Carriers, B.C. Aviation Council, Department of Public Works, Ministry of Transport, Township of Richmond.

Option #2 is generally supported by City of Vancouver, G.V.R.D., Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (A.P.C. member agencies).

Option #3 is generally supported by the Community Forum (A.P.C. member agency).

At the Public Meeting this day City Council heard representations from the following delegations:

- Mr. Ken Johnson, Manager of Airports and Properties for the Pacific Region, owner-operators of the Vancouver International Airport, presented the Department of Transport brief recommending a new runway be constructed. The brief summarized the work of the Airport Planning Committee, considered possible growth patterns at VIA and discussed four basic alternatives: leave things as they are; make additional efforts to manage air traffic; divert air traffic to supplemental airports; create additional capacity by building a parallel runway.

The brief noted there were a number of areas where airport activities, both now and in the future, influence community life and there was a need for continuing discussion with Vancouver and other communities surrounding the airport. The Department of Transport was committed to setting up procedures for constructive consultation and the Federal Minister of Transport invited comment on both the proposal for a 10,600' runway and the shorter runway within the dyke.

- Mr. E. R. Starling submitted a brief on behalf of the Community Forum on Airport Development referring to the studies conducted since the A.P.C. was established in 1973, which, in the opinion of the Community Forum had produced sufficient evidence that expansion should not take place.

Future meetings would continue the discussion as the Community Forum completed its terms of reference by reporting back to the general public on its conclusions. Mr. Starling invited members of Council to attend the meetings scheduled for April 22, at Magee Secondary School, 1975 West 49th Avenue, and April 27, at Minoru Pavilion, Richmond.

Dr. James Tyhurst, another member of the Community Forum, also addressed the meeting.

- Mr. J. Creery, for Dr. McTaggart-Cowan, Advisory Panel to the Minister of the Environment, brief circulated, noted significant gaps in the impact studies. Consideration of these inadequacies had led to the Panel's wholehearted endorsement of the basic recommendation of the Department of the Environment that all proposed developments in the Fraser River estuary and delta, including proposed airport expansion, be suspended until a comprehensive policy had been prepared for the management and protection of the estuary and delta as a vitally important ecological unit. Existing studies showed that development without such a policy may destroy the area as an ecological unit with disastrous environmental and economic consequences.

Vancouver International Airport
Expansion Proposal (cont'd)

- Mr. M. Romaine, Assistant Director, Pacific Region, Environment Canada, presented a brief based on an environmental impact assessment of the expansion proposal which recommended:
 1. A moratorium on further major construction in the area of the Fraser estuary or delta, effective immediately, to enable a comprehensive policy to be prepared for both the management and protection of the area as an ecological unit.
 2. If expansion was considered mandatory, a comparative environmental benefit cost analysis should be conducted on possible alternative airport sites in the Lower Mainland. If it was found airport expansion requirements could only be accommodated at Vancouver International Airport, then such expansion be confined within the existing dyked area of Sea Island and conform to an environmental assessment and review process.
 3. Operational procedures be implemented at the airport to protect at least the present biological value and integrity of the Fraser estuary and delta.
- Mr. R. Mann, former consultant to the Provincial Government for the North Fraser Recreation Study, in a brief dealing principally with conservation and recreation issues, recommended the extension proposal be verified through the application of parallel studies in the area and that specific community initiative be considered as possible factors in the airport development discussion and incorporated as design and planning elements.
- Mr. Will Paulik, Assistant Executive Director, B.C. Wildlife Federation, a member-organization of Community Forum, spoke to a brief (circulated) submitted on behalf of 15,000 Federation members expressing concern about possible effects on the quality of the environment and well-being of wildlife resources. Dredging and channelling of the Fraser River could change the natural features of Vancouver's beaches and Howe Sound, and the intrusion of the shortened runway into bird feeding grounds would greatly increase the hazard to aircraft of bird strikes. The Federation strongly opposed expansion until a policy had been determined for the unique Fraser estuary and delta.
- Mr. Bruce Yorke, for the Committee of Progressive Electors, requested Council pass a motion that the third runway not be constructed. The key study had been arbitrarily repudiated and the Lower Mainland was being asked to give its blessing to a proposal for which no cost figures had been given and which would benefit only 8% of the population - those who used the airlines regularly.
- Mr. Ken J. Hall, Sierra Club and Westwater Research Centre, brief circulated, pointed out the proposed runway was one mile north of the present runway system and very close to the North Arm of the Fraser, which was already drastically affected by urbanization and industrialization along its banks. Airport

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Vancouver International Airport
Expansion Proposal (cont'd)

expansion could affect water quality by pollution from dredging, atmospheric fallout, ground activities, solid and toxic waste disposal and the indirect effect upon Iona sewage treatment plant. The third runway should not be proceeded with until an overall estuarine management policy had been developed and adopted.

- Mr. D.C. Cameron, B.C. Aviation Council, brief circulated, supported the construction of a parallel runway and referred to the validity of Ministry of Transport air traffic forecasts which had proven accurate despite an economic slowdown and an 8.5% local unemployment rate. In January 1976, the airport's passengers increased by 8.2% and air cargo and mail tonnage increased by 35%. The airport was an economic and social necessity to the region, the province and the nation; there was no practical alternative to the present location; traffic was growing while the present runway was deteriorating; no valid case of damage to the environment or ecology had been made.
- Mr. E. W. Watchorn, businessman in the area, expressed concern about the effect of dredging and construction on the river silt flow and the probable eventual cost to the taxpayers.
- Mr. E. Diano, Marpole/Oakridge Area Council, brief circulated, supported the suspension of all proposed developments in the Fraser estuary and delta until a management and protection policy had been prepared. The organization also requested representation on an inter-agency planning and review body to monitor the implementation of noise abatement procedures by the Air Administration and recommended that an immediate study be made on possible neighbourhood deterioration caused by proximity to the airport.
- Mr. W.A. Genereux, for Air Carriers, spoke in support of an immediate start to the third runway.
- Dr. R. Stace-Smith expressed the concerns of the Save Our Parkland Association.
- Mr. J. Creery, Greater Vancouver Citizens' Committee on Noise Abatement, brief circulated, referred to the increased impact of noise on Vancouver and the lack of agreement on a consensus as to the acceptability or unacceptability of the final report of the Noise Study team of the APC.
- Mr. Bruce T. Hamilton, for a group of residents in the Dunbar and South Vancouver area, expressed concern about noise pollution which would greatly increase with the construction of a runway one mile to the north of the present runway.
- Dr. Bob Hindmarch, Dunbar resident, opposed expansion, expressed concern about noise levels and advised the Noise Study had not taken aircraft engine run-ups into consideration.
- Mr. D. Godt, President of the Lower Mainland Branch of the B.C. Wildlife Federation, brief circulated, discussed the ecological implications of the airport expansion.
- Ms. Victoria Olsen, spoke on behalf of the Fish for the Future Committee of the Lower Mainland Regional Wildlife Association and expressed concern that development in the vicinity of the Fraser estuary and delta would have disastrous effects on salmon and other species of fish.

Vancouver International Airport
Expansion Proposal (cont'd)

- The brief of the Steelhead Society presented by Mr. Ed Brechin proposed an immediate moratorium on all development in B.C. estuaries and surrounding foreshores and joint federal and provincial inventories and research of the watershed, leading to the preparation of an estuary policy for the future.
- Mr. G. Gallon, for SPEC, called for a suspension or delay in runway construction plans until questions involving environmental concerns and the liveability of the region for people had been resolved. Dredging of the Fraser River estuary could have long-term erosion effects on the Vancouver shoreline.

SPEC would be submitting a petition with 2,240 signatures, to the Minister of Transport and City Council.

At 11:00 p.m. the Mayor referred to 12 speakers who had registered just prior to the start of the meeting and requested that they submit their ideas in writing to the Council, or deliver their comments at the public meeting to be sponsored by the Community Forum on April 22 at Magee Secondary School.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:05 p.m.

The foregoing are Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of April 6, 1976, adopted on April 27, 1976.

A. Phillips
MAYOR

B. N. Little
CITY CLERK